

## FY2016 Annual Report

### Information Provided

# of Inquiries Received (by telephone, e-mail, or in person)

FY	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Total
2016	206	147	167	117	129	115	97	124	118	127	183	133	1663
2015	169	140	121	121	104	100	141	127	127	149	150	185	1634
2014	150	130	98	162	175	147	114	104	123	125	152	186	1666

### Complaint Resolution

# of Complaints Opened & Closed / Average # of Days from Open to Close

FY	Complaints Opened					Complaints Closed					Ave Days Open
	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr	2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr	3 <sup>rd</sup> Qtr	4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr	Total	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr	2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr	3 <sup>rd</sup> Qtr	4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr	Total	
2016	81	65	74	75	295	84	62	62	77	285	40
2015	79	66	64	76	285	82	66	57	77	282	37
2014	85	44	94	95	318	87	58	63	111	319	40

Restitution Obtained Through Mediation

FY	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr	2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr	3 <sup>rd</sup> Qtr	4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr	Total
2016	\$26,344	\$14,517	\$23,468	17,193	\$ 81,669
2015	\$11,331	\$16,684	\$10,638	\$81,899	\$120,551
2014	\$48,688	\$19,000	\$9,117	\$29,772	\$106,577

### Education and Outreach

Education & Outreach Efforts

	Fairs/Public Events	Education Presentations	OCA Alerts and Press Stories	# of people and organizations on newsletter list	Social Media	
					# Facebook likes	#NMH posts / subscribers
FY16	11	28	37	639	214	1866
FY15	22	27	28	480	196	1813
FY14	11	22	17	390	191	1669

## **Licensing Activity**

### Licensing Activity

	Peddlers/ Solicitors	Trespass Towing
2016	340	14
2015	404	13
2014	116	10

## **Enforcement Activity**

Date	Violation	Action	Result
July 2015	Offer of “free” gift contingent on submitting to sales presentation	Investigation of complaint	Assurance of Discontinuance

## **Highlights**

### **Consumer Education**

On March 2, 2016, over 125 people attended “Know Before You Owe Student Loan Forum and Resource Fair” sponsored by the Office of Consumer Affairs and Consumer Advisory Board. The event featured a panel of experts who provided information on how prospective students and their families can make informed decisions on: how to finance higher education; determine manageable debt loads; shop for student loans; and avoid consumer scams surrounding higher education. Following the event, attendees were able to meet one-on-one with panel member and other organizations and obtain resource materials.

### **Examples of Complaints**

A tenant complained that he was charged a \$100.00 non-refundable common area fee at the time of application. As this fee is not supported by the Maryland Landlord Tenant Act, OCP was quickly able to get the apartment management to refund the fee to the complaining tenant. OCP is continuing its efforts to ensure that the apartment complex refunds the improperly charged fee to all other tenants who were similarly charged.

Consumers complained that they were not able to settle on their new house on the scheduled date due to the builder’s delay. The delay caused unnecessary financial hardship for the consumers including: the cost of moving into an efficiency apartment, additional moving and storage fees, and attorney fees. OCP was able to mediate a settlement payment of \$3674 .00.

### **Kudos**

From OCA’s consumer satisfaction survey: “I was most pleased with the rapid, friendly and helpful response I received after I sent in my complaint. The person I dealt with was knowledgeable and always responded in a timely manner. Even though my complaint did not result in a positive outcome for me, I feel that your agency did the best they could.